a plurality of subtanks, communicated with said at least one main tank, each subtank storing ink supplied from said at least one main tank, and being communicated with at least one recording head.

4. (Amended) The ink jet recording apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein at least one of said subtanks is airtightly formed by a material having flexibility so that a volume of said at least one subtank is variable.

5. (Amended) The ink jet recording apparatus as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

a first ink amount detector, which detects an ink amount stored in at least one of said subtanks; and

a first supply amount controller, which controls a supply amount of ink flowing into said at least one subtank, based on a detection of the first ink amount detector.

7. (Amended) The ink jet recording apparatus as set forth in claim 6, wherein:

the first valve member is opened when the first ink amount detector detects an ink low state in which the ink amount stored in the at least one subtank is at a first predetermined level or less; and

the first valve member is closed when the first ink amount detector detects an ink full state in which the ink amount stored in the at least one subtank is at a second predetermined level or more.

8. (Amended) The ink jet recording apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein at least one of said subtanks is communicated with a plurality of recording heads.

9. (Amended) The ink jet recording apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein the at least one main tank and the subtanks are arranged so as to provide a head difference therebetween, to supply ink from the at least one main tank to the subtanks.

10. (Amended) The ink jet recording apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein the at least one main tank is compressed to supply ink to the subtanks.

11. (Amended) The ink jet recording apparatus as set forth in claim 10, wherein the at least one main tank is compressed by a pump member.

12. (Amended) The ink jet recording apparatus as set forth in claim 11, wherein the pump member is connected to the at least one main tank via an air releaser which opens the at least one main tank to an atmosphere.

13. (Amended) The ink jet recording apparatus as set forth in claim 6, further comprising a second supply amount controller, which controls a supply amount of ink flowing out of the at least one main tank.

15. (Amended) The ink jet recording apparatus as set forth in claim 14, wherein the second valve member is first opened while the at least one main tank is compressed, and then the first valve member is opened to supply ink to the at least one subtank.

16. (Amended) The ink jet recording apparatus as set forth in claim 14, wherein the first valve member is first closed and the compressing of the at least one main tank is canceled when the at least one subtank is replenished, and the second valve member is then closed.

17. (Amended) The ink jet recording apparatus as set forth in claim 4, wherein each subtank contains a plate member which prevents inner surfaces of the respective subtanks from being adhered with each other.

45. (Amended) An ink supply system, comprising:

at least one main tank, which stores ink therein;

a plurality of recording heads, communicated with said at least one main tank while providing a head difference therebetween; and

a system controller, which monitors an ink amount consumed in each recording head to manage a residual ink amount in the at least one main tank.

82. (Amended) The ink supply system as set forth in claim 45, further comprising a memory for storing a residual ink amount in the at least one main tank.